



November 2008

TWIN HARBORS/LEWIS COUNTY FSA NEWS

Twin Harbors/Lewis Co FSA Office

1554 Bishop Rd Ste 100
Chehalis WA 98532
(360) 748-0083 ext 2
(360) 740-9745 (fax)

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

County Committee

Byron Bentson, Chair
Vic Boekelman, V-Chair
Sam Zion, Member
Allen Devlin, Member
Leo Zylstra, Member
Ann Aho, Advisor
Liz Anderson, Advisor

Office Staff

Jeff Peterson, CED
Lynne White, PT

Farm Loan Staff

Ruth Wynn, FL PT
Chehalis, WA
Mark Turner, FLM
Lynden, WA

Next COC Meeting

December 4, 2008
9:30 AM

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DEADLINES AND DATES TO REMEMBER

NAP Signup
12/1/2008

COC Ballots Returned
12/1/2008

Office Closures

Nov 11 – Veteran's Day
Nov 27 – Thanksgiving Day
Dec 25 – Christmas Day

Employment opportunities for
the USDA Farm Service
Agency and Washington State
FSA are listed on the FSA
website:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa>

Handicapped Accommodations:
Special accommodations will be
arranged for those persons with a
physical, vision, or hearing
impaired disability. If special
accommodations are needed,
please contact our office.

New CED Hired

On October 12, 2008 I started as your new County Executive Director. I have worked for FSA since 2000 as the Farm Loan Officer in Chehalis. I wanted to expand my expertise with FSA and can do so as your CED. Throughout the coming year I will be traveling to various FSA offices for training. When I am in the office, I look forward to working with you to meet your farming needs. If you have not met me before, please stop by the office and introduce yourself. I grew up in Lewis County and am an avid hunter and fisherman. I enjoy spending time with my family and coaching my children's sports.

Jeff Peterson

NAP Coverage

The application deadline for the 2009 coverage on fall seeded crops has been extended to December 1, 2008. In order to be eligible for disaster assistance programs, producers are required to timely purchase, at a minimum, CAT coverage for all insurable crops and/or NAP coverage for all non-insurable crops on their entire farm.

NAP coverage for 2009 costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1,875 total per producer for all counties.

Contact the county office if you would like more information or are interested in applying for NAP coverage.

FSA Offers Farm Loans

Each year Congress allocates dollars to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to operate an Agricultural Lending program. We presently have priority funding set aside to assist beginning farmers with their farming operations. Also, a portion of the funds are specifically allocated for minority and women. While FSA farm loans are available to all qualified applicants, by setting aside funds specifically for minorities and women, it ensures that they will receive a portion of available funds.

Loan funds can be used to purchase farms, livestock and equipment. They may also be used to operate the farm, build or repair farm service buildings, pay for soil and water conservation practices, and in some cases refinance debts. FSA offers both direct and guaranteed farm loans.

For direct loans made by FSA to purchase a farm the terms may extend up to 40 years. Applicants for direct real estate loans need to be aware that funding for this program may be limited, making it necessary to wait for a period of time before funds are available. Direct operating loans may be made for one to seven years.

The FSA guaranteed loans are made by banks or other lenders for which FSA guarantees up to 90% of any loss. The guaranteed loan program includes both operation and real estate loan programs.

County Committee Elections

County Committee elections are underway. On November 3, 2008 ballots will be sent to all producers in Local Administrative Areas (LAA).

LAA#3 encompasses all of Pacific County except the costal areas contained in Range 11. **Vic Boekelman** (forester) will be on the ballot for this LAA.

LAA#5 encompasses the eastern two thirds of Lewis County and includes all land east of the E/W meridian.

Leo Zylstra (dairy farmer) and **Don Taylor** (beef rancher) will be on the ballot for this LAA.

The deadline for returning the ballots to the county office, either in person or by mail, is December 1, 2008. County FSA Committee elections are held annually. Candidates are nominated by local farmers and ranchers, and must live in the LAA they will represent and must be eligible to vote in the county election. Contact the FSA office if you need a ballot or additional information.

Ballots will be counted at the December 4, 2008 committee meeting which begins at 9:30 am. Elected committee members and alternates take office on Jan. 1, 2009.

**BE SURE TO SIGN YOUR BALLOT ENVELOPE OR
YOUR VOTE CAN NOT BE COUNTED.**

Direct Deposit

FSA assistance payments are issued by Direct Deposit. Have you changed your checking/banking information you have on file with us? Please notify your Farm Service Agency office of any banking changes. Don't make it impossible for your assistance payments to find you.

New Terminology for Farm Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill grants exceptions to certain program rules for beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers/ranchers. This statutory terminology is not new to FSA's loan programs but it is new for most other programs. Definitions may differ slightly depending on the program.

A beginning farmer/rancher is an individual or an entity who has operated a farm for 10 years or less and who participates substantially in the farm/ranch operation. For loan purposes of purchasing a farm, the farm must be no more than 30 percent of the median size farm in the county. All members of an entity must meet the definition for the entity to be considered beginning farmers or ranchers. This definition applies to the purchase of a 2008 risk management waiver for disaster assistance programs.

A socially disadvantaged farmer/rancher is a member of a demographic group whose members have historically been subjected to racial, ethnic, or for some programs, gender prejudice. Groups include: American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics/Latinos. For DCP, ACRE and farm loans, women meet the socially disadvantaged definition. Socially disadvantaged, without the gender consideration, is applicable for the purchase of a 2008 risk management waiver for disaster assistance programs.

A limited resource farmer/rancher is an individual who, in the previous two years, has had gross farm sales of not more than \$100,000 (base year 2004) adjusted for inflation. Additionally, the farmer/rancher must have a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four or less than 50% of county median household income. A tool that adjusts for inflation and county can be found at <http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/tool.asp> or ask for assistance at our office. The limited resource definition applies to DCP, ACRE, ECP, NAP, farm loans and the purchase of a 2008 risk management waiver for disaster assistance programs.

Farm Divisions and Reconstitutions

Any land divisions or additions on your farm impacts your acreage bases. For program purposes, FSA adheres to a landowner designation of dividing bases in the manner agreed to by the parent farm owner and purchaser or transferee. This method of dividing the bases may be used when any part of a farm or tract is sold or ownership is transferred, an entire tract or farm is sold to two or more persons, or farm or tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. The land sold or transferred must have been owned for at least three years unless the County Committee approves a waiver of this requirement.

Signature Authority for Spouses

Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office. A spouse may not, however, sign a Power of Attorney on behalf of the spouse, nor may they sign on behalf of the other as an authorized signatory for entities. Spouses must also have Powers of Attorneys on file to sign for claim settlements such as promissory notes.

MILC Program Signup (*to be announced soon*)

The Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program is expected soon. Once the initial signup period is announced, it will be held for only 30 days from the initial start date. Local dairy producers are encouraged to check in periodically with our office and follow closely any announcements regarding this program.

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